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A HISTORY
OF
INDIANOLA

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Dallas, Texas

Compiled and Written by

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Historian for the Indianola Historical Association

Seeligson

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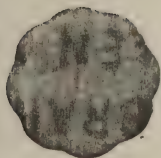
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PREFACES

By THE PUBLISHERS

(EDITORS NOTE)

Organization of the Indianola Historical Association at Cuero, on April 17th, 1930, had as one of its underlying purposes the perpetuation of the history, and social traditions of the town that during the early colonial days of Texas served as the gateway to the state, and was the busy seat of commerce and trade on the Texas gulf coast. To carry out this purpose the following history of the town and its peoples, has been compiled by Mrs. Lelia Seeligson, who spent much of her girlhood in this social center and whose father, Charles C. Hower-ton was one of the leading citizens of the old town.

During the year between the initial meeting of the former citizens of Indianola and their descendants at Cuero and the second reunion at Port Lavaca on Sunday, May 17th, Mrs. Seeligson

spent many hours in collecting the data which has gone into the comprehensive and detailed story of Indianola. From old letters, from newspapers stained with age, and through interviews with old pioneer residents of the destroyed town, the historian was able to secure the interesting facts and incidents that are set forth in the following article.

The history was read at the Port Lavaca meeting and was one of the interesting features of the program on that day. It was thereupon resolved that the history be prepared in pamphlet form to be distributed to all members of the association. Because the nucleus of Cuero's citizenship is made up of the former residents of Indianola and because of its historical value, The Record presents the history in full to its readers.

By THE AUTHOR

In compiling the following outline of the history of Indianola, we have interviewed many of the survivors of that ill fated town,

have dug into files, histories, books, and newspaper clippings, and have gleaned the following facts.

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INDIANOLA

HISTORY OF INDIAN POINT

La Salle, the French explorer, in seeking for the mouth of the Mississippi River, mis-calculated and was driven on the South West Coast of Texas and landed near Corpus Christi in the year 1685. He soon re-embarked and sailed up the Coast. La Salle's boat, "The Belle" was the only vessel of four to cross the bar at Pass Cavallo into a Bay named by the explorer, San Banardo, since called "Matagorda." This is the first recorded discovery of Matagorda Bay. The deepest water on the Texas Coast is here and later it was known far and wide as a haven for ships with its light house protecting bays and docks.

La Salle extended his explorations up Matagorda Bay, landing about where Port Lavaca is now situated. On the Episcopal Church at Lavaca, is placed an iron cross, supposed to have been dropped by La Salle or one of his men. His boat was wrecked in a storm, but he continued up the coast, formed a settlement at Dimmitt Point. He soon left this settlement and was shot from ambush by one of his men.

The island on which Indian Point afterward known as "Old Town" was built, lies off the Southern Coast of Texas, is about three miles long and from one half to one mile wide. At one time the beach drive ranked among the first in the State, being four miles of smooth beach on Bay front and equally that number on the lake shore. The island is protected from the Gulf by Matagorda Peninsula and between the island and main land, lies

powder Horn Lake. At its southern extremity, where large ships can ply, is Powder Horn Bayou and Stevens Bayou cuts it off from main land on the North. It is situated about fifteen miles from Lavaca and thirty five from Victoria.

The climate, though salubrious, "was not infrequently subjected to sudden and severe changes." Heavy fogs would occur and the winters usually balmy and pleasant, sometimes grew cold and frigid, as in the year 1863 when a heavy snow storm occurred and in 1857 when the Coast country was visited by a cold norther that froze the water in the Bay, twenty feet out from shore, in two hours.

Early historians state that Lavaca was the first landing place, however, the larger ships anchored outside the bar at Pass Cavallo, passengers and freight were lightered in and the island began to be inhabited during President Houston's second administration in 1841-1844.

Prince Solms Braunsfelt, a German explorer, who had visited Texas as early as 1814, returned to Germany with glowing descriptions of this new country. He described "Texas as the land of Milk and Honey; of Perennial Flowers; of Crystal Streams, rich and fruitful beyond measure, where roamed myriad of deer and buffalo, while the primeval forest abounded in wild fowls of every kind."

He made many trips back and forth and succeeded in bringing settlers to Indian Point and other Texas settlements. 'Tis claimed

that only one family was living at Indian Point when some excellent families from the old South and Prince Solms Braunsfelt arrived with a colony from Germany; in the year 1845.

When Indian Point began to assume proportions of a village a small wharf was built and here the smaller boats landed their passengers and cargoes. Probably 'twas from this wharf that Captain Jerry Smith took from Matagorda Bay the first cargo of cattle shipped from Texas in 1849."

But after a tropical storm had wrecked a large steamer near this point, the wharf was moved to Powder Horn.

At first tents were extensively used, a few houses were built of mud and straw, but in course of time, these gave place to buildings constructed of lumber or concrete slabe. In later years a "lime cool" was used for manufacturing these blocks. First a row of oyster shells, then timber and then lime were burned. This was crushed into blocks and of this material, the Court House was built in 1857 at Powder Horn.

In early days, fresh water was lamentably scarce and rain water was caught in barrels, tubs and overground cisterns. Tallow candles were in vogue. Folks living in this advanced age can scarcely conceive of the innumerable difficulties and handicaps under which the early settlers made a start in this new country on this isolated island. Indians were lurking about and a fear of a raid continuously haunted the settlers.

Few vehicles or modes of transportation were to be had and cooking stoves were almost unknown. One man owned a large

bake oven to which women resorted with fresh dough and for a small sum had bread baked.

One is surprised to learn that at one time, "town lots sold as high as four thousand dollars," especially, when we remember that when "President Houston took oath of office as Governor of Texas, public debt was two million dollars, population fifty thousand, most of whom did not see a dollar from year's end to year's end. During President Houston's administration, there was paid into the Treasury only \$500.00 in actual money." Now, we get a glimpse of the prosperity of this young village.

Calhoun County came into existence April 4th, 1846. On December 2, 1846, Richard West was elected first Sheriff. Henry I. Husk, Probate Judge. Issac Baugh, County Clerk.

The first business houses at Indian Point were Runge's, Fromme's and Jacob Mass, located side by side. Then Fromme and Runge formed a partnership which lasted a short while, when Henry Runge and Andrew Dove went into business and this firm continued until the war "between the states," when the Yankees took possession of Runge's and Dove's warehouse and used it as a Commissary. Next, we find the Runge firm composed of Emil Reiffert and Wm. Froese, who had bought out Henry Runge and continued the business under firm name. Edward Mugge was added to the firm in 1867. Under this management and their descendants, the firm of H. Runge & Company has flourished to the present day.

Henry and Herman Runge were brothers, one was tall and the

other small, their friends called them "Long Runge" and "Short Runge." In a tent in 1845 was established H. Runge & Company's Bank, which grew and flourished until now it has the distinction of being the oldest private unincorporated bank in the State of Texas. Henry Runge may have been short of stature, but he was long on the banking business. He was also appointed U. S. Consul at Indian Point.

Mrs. Ernestine Mayne, still living, is the oldest inhabitant of Indian Point, so far as can be ascertained. She and her parents landed at Port Lavaca in 1846 and soon moved to Indian Point. She states that the religious services held at Indian Point was in Mr. Elder's warehouse, when a Baptist preacher, Rev. Ohr and James Howerton, Sr., a Baptist layman organized the first Sunday School. Mr. Howerton was made Superintendent and his daughter-in-law led singing with violin. Mrs. Mayne being a charter member. The first church building was a Baptist Church. Rev. Daniel Baker visited the village in 1848 and organized a Presbyterian Church. Rev. Holcinger, a Lutheran minister, lived across the Bay, but went to Indian Point to preach as early as 1854. A Methodist Church was also built sometime in the fifties.

First School was taught by August Windburg. This was a private school, as public or free schools were not introduced into the State of Texas until 1854. I am informed that in early days, school boys swept and cleaned the school rooms, also the Churches.

Frederick Geopherd was the first music teacher.

First hotel was opened by Mrs.

Kessler, whose father was employed by the U. S. Government to cart provisions to the different forts throughout the country.

In the year 1856 the Government sent out 34 camels under care of Mr. Mendez and Mr. Gonzales. Later in same year 41 more arrived. These camels were intended to transport supplies to frontier posts and for road building purposes. Two Spaniards accompanied them as official drivers or keepers. Some claim there were more than these to land at Indianola, at any rate, a drove stampeded doing no end of damage, breaking down fences, trampling gardens and demolishing almost everything in their path. The inhabitants were infuriated and scalded them with boiling water and pelted them with sticks. The camels were finally corralled in a beer garden situated on the main land about one mile from Indian Point. "The last record of any of these camels was in 1887 in Western Arizona."

The leading physicians were Dr. J. M. Reuss and Dr. George Lewis, who were partners in the practice of medicine as well as in the drug business.

In the year 1852, the first scourge of cholera and yellow fever was brought in from the West Indies. There were few doctors and no trained nurses. The inhabitants died like flies. During this awful epidemic, indefinable qualities of love and kindness were exhibited. Young men and young women served as nurses, minus a salary. They also consoled the bereaved and helped bury the dead. For weeks the demands were so insistent; that little time was had for change of garments, and sleep was almost

unknown. Their devotions "transcend the limits of the earthly, attaining the divine."

A negro regiment camped behind Mrs. Volk's house and on one occasion she counted twelve soldiers laid out for burial.

Mrs. Mayne was the first victim to recover from the cholera at Indian Point. In December 1852, Mr. Gruehner, father of Mrs. Mary Kleinecke, arrived from Germany and settled at Indian Point. The following year another awful epidemic of yellow fever again swept the Coast country. Mr. Gruehner was stricken and carried to the pest house. When his wife and children called next day, they were horrified to find that he was dead and buried.

During the "war between the States," Captain Thomas Mayne and Captain Stas ran a blockade to Mexico, and while Captain Mayne was away, a Yankee Captain of Artillery, Twist, by name, asked permission of Mrs. Mayne to stretch a tent in her yard. He stated he would place a guard around to protect her, she consented to this and as she expressed it, "He kept his word and was a gentleman, if he was a Yankee."

The first marriage occurring at Indian Point was a Mr. Joe Midas and Miss Seger.

The settlers of Indian Point were so peace loving that there were few brawls and only one person was known to be jailed.

In 1853, the exodus began from Indian Point to Powder Horn, a distance of three miles down the Island. Many remained in their homes and carried on household duties as their houses were moved, and most of the mercantile houses were moved in like

manner.

POWDER-HORN

Afterward Named

INDIANOLA

THE GATE WAY TO INTERIOR OF TEXAS

'Tis claimed by some authority that Prince Solms Braunsfelt must have landed near the site of Indianola proper in 1844 and called it "Carl's Haven." That being the case, the town possessed three names "Carl's Haven," "Powder-Horn", and "Indianola." The name powder-Horn was given it from the fact that the land on which the town was built lies in shape of a cow's horn, but the name was changed early in the year 1849. Mrs. (Major) John Henry Brown naming it Indianola. Some of the old inhabitants were very much disgruntled over the change of name. Levi Jones laid off the town.

"In 1848 there were only three houses in Powder-Horn when Mr. R. V. Moore moved there. Prince Solms Braunsfelt owned one, afterward occupied by Mr. Lieboldt. Mr. Schwartz another and a small house near Powder-Horn Bayou constituted the sum total." Indian Point, which from now on we will call Old Town, was quite a little settlement. Folks from Powder-Horn better known as Indianola did their trading there. As inhabitants multiplied and business and buildings increased, the town grew by leaps and bounds and it was found necessary to build a wharf. Chas. Morgan of New York had one built 22 feet wide, about four hundred yards below the one built by Runge and Poole. These wharves extended about a half mile into the bay. Indianola served as a Port for almost all

the country lying West of the Colorado River to the Rio Grande in the State of Texas, also reaching into Mexico and California. Three ships a week from Galveston and two from New Orleans, all sailing vessels, made this Port until the advent of side-wheel steamers in 1859 or 1860. Prior to this, ships brought cargoes from upper rivers and docked at Powder-Horn Bayou.

Large wagons called Prairie Schooners drawn by ten and twelve yoke of oxen and two wheel Mexican carts with raw hide beds and drawn by two yoke of oxen or by six mules, came and went in long trains. Wagons of Wells Fargo Express Company drawn by sixteen mules, four abreast, brought silver bullion from Chichuhua, Mexico, in fact this was the concentration point of all the gold and silver bullion from the mines in Mexico and shipped by sailing vessels to the U. S. Mint at New Orleans. These wagons came heavily guarded. A stage coach left twice a week for California and a man with a winchester, always took his seat beside the driver.

"In 1851 large quantities of stores for army posts at San Antonio and El Paso were shipped from Baltimore via New Orleans and Indianola. From the latter place they were conveyed by special wagon trains, sometimes consisting of a hundred and fifty vehicles. It required three laborious weeks to make trips from San Antonio to El Paso."

"There were no rich people in Indianola, but there was plenty of money in circulation. It cost next to nothing to live. Fish and oysters were abundant. Market was glutted with all kinds of

game and the air creaked under the weight of millions of wild fowls.

"In the pure ozone of the coast country meat kept fresh for days without salting. The jobbing houses carried expensive stocks of goods and did immense wagon trade and all of them bought hides and tallow. Great droves of long horned cattle were driven through the main streets of town headed for the ships and docks, many had never been branded. They were shipped to New Orleans, Cuba and other points. When one broke loose from the herd in town, the cow boys galloped after it, roped it and returned it to herd even though it had to be dragged."

"During reconstruction times Federal Troups quartered in town. One time a new northern officer undertook to head off a wild steer that had broken loose from the herd. He evidently thought that all cattle were such as he had known in New England. He discovered his mistake when the steer placed his horns under him and tossed him nine feet in the air. At or near Indianola at one time there were three concerns engaged in wholesale slaughtering of cattle for their hide and tallow. Cattle were driven into chutes and killed, hoisted by hind legs and skinned, precisely as cattle are handled in packing plants today, but there the comparison stops. Indianola butchers had no further concern for the carcasses after the hide and tallow were removed. The carcasses were hauled some distance beyond the limit of the town and there left for the hogs, birds and beasts of prey. The people were welcome to all the fresh meat

they could carry away."

In 1857 the San Antonio, Mexican Gulf Railroad between Lavaca and Victoria were built under the supervision of Colonel Gustav Schleicher, Mr. J. Ganuary, and General Joseph E. Johnson. Financed by Chas. Morgan of New York. During the war between the States, this road was destroyed and a financial slump occuring about that time—termed "Black Friday" crippled Mr. Morgan to such an extent that Mr. Pearce then assumed the financing of a road from Indianola to Victoria in 1859, later on to Cuero. Colonel Schleicher, who afterwards was elected to Congress and Mr. Cunningham were Civil Engineers, who supervised the building of the road. It was named Gulf West Texas and Pacific Railroad and part of the old Lavaca road bed was used in rebuilding the railroad from Victoria to Indianola and a spur to Lavaca from Chocolate was added. Mr. Evens was first superintendent of the G. W. T. and Pacific Railroad with Tom Poole as Agent. Mr. Evens was succeeded by Capt. Henry Sheppard, a sea captain who had lost three steam ships by fire. The last one "Perseverance" was securely moored to the T-head at Indianola and Mrs. Sheppard was entertaining a dinner party on board. Only one mate was on duty, when the cry of "Fire" was sounded. When discovered it was too far advanced to be extinguished but the guests and passengers were safely landed and the vessel steamed out into the Bay and burned all night. Even after when the tide is low the boiler of "Perseverance" is still seen in Matagorda Bay. The bell was salvaged by the three Holzheuser and two

Wasserman boys and given to the Lutheran Church in Cuero. The Cuero Fire Company afterwards bought it. As above stated, Capt. Henry Sheppard was President and Superintendent of G. W. T. and P. R. R. and M. D. Monserate Sec.-Treasurer and General Agent. Mr. Holzheuser was employed by the Railroad from its inception. Principal offices located in Indianola. This railroad was in operation for quite a while minus a telegraph wire. The first telegraphic communication in the State of Texas was established between Houston and Galveston in 1860. The lines were gradually extended to the principal cities of the State. In 1875 Congress made appropriations to connect the Military Posts on frontier, and lines were built during the year 1876. But this G. W. T. & P. R. R. was run many years minus telegraph wires. 'Tis said that trains were sometimes run from Victoria to Indianola by sails and pulled by mules. A tri-weekly arrangement, go one week and try to get back the next, and when the railroad track was laid to T-head the cattle loaded cars were drawn by mules.

A turtle packery was built between the old town and the new. In fact Indianola boosted three turtle packeries. Two above mentioned and one on Blind Bayou.

In Indianola when the railroad track was built on wharf to T-head it deprived sixty draymen of a livelihood, but all economic conditions finally adjust themselves and the town soon recovered from this depression. Her business increased in volume, revenues were multiplied, and great prosperity was evinced along every line to such an extent

that she was called "The Queen City of the West" and ranked with Galveston as one of the two important seaports on the Texas Coast. Morgan owned the steam boats that plied between Galveston, New York, New Orleans and Cuba. Soon the Vanderbilt interests built three fine steamers to compete with the Morgan line. One day a steamer of each line was in port, rivalry was keen, the Vanderbilt captain stepped forward and shouted "come aboard, free trip and return." Morgan soon bought out the Vanderbilt line.

Before the advent of steamboats quite a number of sailing vessels, "Belle of the Bay," "Eddie Huck", and "Fraudin" were exceedingly popular with the young people. When the ships hoisted anchor and headed for other ports, a string band was employed and the young people would board these vessels, go as far as the Gulf of Mexico, "dance all night 'till broad daylight and go home with the girls in the morning." In 1866 a severe storm visited Indianola, but no lives were lost and no buildings destroyed. The "Ajax" a lumber sailing vessel from Pensacola, Florida, was driven thru the wharf by the force of the wind and grounded in front of the Cassimire Hotel and remained there for months.

When the war between the States was declared few of the inhabitants thought they would see actual fighting, but on November the first 1862, three Yankee gun boats entered Pass Cavallo. Captain J. M. Reuss with his company of Southern soldiers was encamped on Saluria Island. The Captain fearing his men

would be surrounded and cut off from supplies, gave orders to move. They fired "Long Tom" their famous cannon and retreated up the Coast to Indianola. The Yankee Captain demanded the town to surrender. A loaded yawl was sent in under a flag of truce to take over the city. This was refused by Major Schae, the military commander and the best terms that could be obtained was an hour and a half to move the women, children and sick. Yellow fever was raging at the time. Those strong enough were moved, others too ill, to move were forced to remain. Promptly at the expiration of the truce, a northern ship began to bombard the city. They continued until dark, having fired 175 shells. The fire was returned with spirit. About eleven o'clock the next day the city surrendered. This battle is not recorded. The information is taken from an old letter. On February 4th, 1863 a battle was fought in the streets of Indianola in which the Yankees lost one man and had one wounded. Southern troops lost two and had five wounded. In December 1863, a few Federal troops occupied the town and in January 1864, three other brigades of Infantry under General Warren came, they tore down all houses owned by Southern soldiers to use in their encampment. It was estimated by their officers that they killed 2000 head of cattle during their stay in town of four months. They evacuated Indianola in May 1864. At the close of war in 1865 the town was infested with both white and negro troops who committed many acts of violence and it was necessary that all citizens keep guards most of the time.

Prior to this southern troops

were being drilled for the Confederate Army, others were leaving for the front. Mr. H. E. Moore, Joe and Dan Sullivan joined Colonel Buchel's regiment of Cavalry. Mr. Will Moore, James and Joe Collins, John Coates, Dan Hoffman and others left for Bowling Green, Kentucky, where they were mustered in as Terry's Texas Rangers.

At Indianola a flag was made by the ladies and was presented by Miss Amelia Rouff to the confederate company stationed there. Mr. F. S. Stockdale made a short address, accepting the flag. Eleven young girls representing the seceding states, each presented a state flag and recited an appropriate verse for the state she represented.

Rachael Woodward, Belle Milby, Kate Ashworth, Ida Crosland, Maggie Clements, Lissie Perrin, Zuleika Cleveland, Mollie Burk, Alice McCoppin, Eudora Moore, Emma Carter, were the girls presenting the flags.

During the year 1863 a company under Captain George of Seguin, Colonel Hobby's regiment, was stationed at Indianola for eight months. Ireland who was afterwards elected Governor of Texas, was the Major at that time. The wharf, railroad bridge and a large pile of lumber was burned by order of the confederate officer. This was done to keep the Yankees from gaining possession of them. He intended to burn the bridge to Cemetery, but Captain Reuss said, "How can we bury our dead?" so that was abandoned.

One of the first public celebrations was held near Mr. Moore's residence. After the speaking was over Ben Varnell, jestingly said to Mr. Crain, the speaker, "I al-

ways did like that speech, but 'twas better this time."

Among the outstanding events after the war was a torch light procession to celebrate the election of Tilden the Democrat who had won the election for the United States Presidency over Hays, a Republican, but some manipulation of figures was in process at Washington whereby the Republicans captured the Presidency for Hays. Blain, the Republican leader, wrote a friend and fearing the interception of the letter by the Democrats, wrote, "Burn this letter." D. R. Regan, bet Dr. Rosencrans one thousand dollars that Tilden would be elected and he was, and Dr. Rosenchans remarked "Tilden will never take his seat", and he did not. During this torch light parade, D. H. Regan passed up and down the line, handing out letters which were burned.

First marriage to take place in Indianola was Chas. Noll and Mary Erps.

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J. R. Pullin, Jim Crain, Tom Allen and C. D. Hogan attended. "We had for refreshments cold black wine, and ginger cake," some one informed us.

Jeff McLeMore was the town's Poet. He wrote Indianola and other poems.

Now let us take a mental walk up the beach with Mrs. Essis Dale Allen.

Facing front street beginning at Powder Horn Bayou, were the following houses: 1st, Huck's Lumber Yard, two story hotel, store, Dan Sullivan's residence, Hogan Home, John Payne, Warehouse, Crosland, Yarrington, Open Square with Balridge Warehouse, Dale's Store, Chas. Walker

Tin Shop, Dr. Lewis' Drug Store, Sam Kinley's Home, Wm. Milby's Auction House, Saloon, Barber Shop, Cassimire Hotel, 3 story largest in town, Custom House, Hubbell Livery Stable, House used as School, Hez Woodward Teacher, Wm. H. Woodward's residence, Balridge home, Andrew Dove's home, Cassimier residence, Huck's residence, Roman Catholic Church, Henry Iken home, D. C. Proctor home, McClary home, Johannes home, Kleinecke home; farther up the court house, Fromme home.

"With the exception of the one murder committed there, in the long drawn out Taylor and Sutton feud which originated in DeWitt county and which began during reconstruction time, Indianola knew little of wild West life." The citizens had warned these gangs they must come to town in peace or not at all. Once the Sutton faction got noisy in one of the saloons. Mayor John Barlow and four aldermen armed with shot guns invaded the saloon and informed the gang they were under arrest and demanded their arms, which they handed over without a murmur. The Mayor then marched them to the city hall and as Ex-Officio Judge of the Police Court fined them for disturbing the peace and confiscated their guns.

After that the conduct of both factions, when they came to Indianola was exemplary, save when the most dastardly murder ever perpetrated in the town was committed in the year 1874, when Wm. Sutton was shot down at his wife's side by Jim Taylor when boarding the steamship "Clinton" bound for New Orleans.

Following is a list of the first

churches, hotels and a few citizens, as far as I could learn:

CHURCHES

Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic.

MAYORS

Nelson McCleary, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Cleveland, Dr. F. E. Hughes, Chas. Hogan.

HOTELS

Cassimire Hotel, Eiken House, Carter Hotel, Ohler House, Magnolia Hotel.

SCHOOL-TEACHERS

Rev. Tays (Episcopal), Miss Smith, Cleveland Yates, Father Glenn, W. H. Crain, Assistant, Thomas Colston, (the gentleman from the States), Sigmond Wagner, Hez. Woodward.

LAWYERS

Gov. F. S. Stockdale, Mr. Jones, Col. D. C. Proctor, Gen. Woodward, Hon. W. H. Crain.

FIRST SHERIFFS

Richard West, C. C. Howerton, 1860 or 61.

FIRST COUNTY CLERKS

Issac Baugh (others) Dale, John B. Burk, Lewis Ryan, Turner.

FIRST DISTRICT CLERK

J. H. Davis.

DOCTORS

Dr. J. M. Reuss, Dr. Geo. Lewis, Dr. F. E. Hughs, Dr. Henry Leek, Dr. Baldrige, Dr. Rosencrance, Dr. Dallam, Dr. T. J. McFarland.

JUDGES

Henry I. Huske, Theodore Miller, Huck.

FIRST ASSR. AND COLLECTOR

Sam T. Watts.

FIRST CO. TREASURER

Dr. Lewis, T. R. Thelkeld.

FIRST CITY MARSHALL

Deitgh.

NEWSPAPERS

Mr. Bennet, Mr. Ogsbery.

QUARANTINE STATIONS

Henry Mendez, Dr. Rose, Geo. Holzheuser, Dr. McFarland.

From the Indianola Bulletin, Extra, (January 4th, 1867.)

FIRE AT INDIANOLA EIGHTY THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH OF PROPERTY DE- STROYED. FOURTEEN BUILD- INGS BURNED.

About four o'clock this morning, our citizens were startled with the cry of "Fire" and the ringing of bells. The fire originated in the building on Main Street, belonging to Mr. Dudley Schultz and occupied by Shipley and Company, Commission Merchants. The wind blowing from the south at the time, it immediately communicated to the adjoining buildings on the corner of Messrs. Dove and Schultz Groceries, taking in its fiery course the warehouse of Messrs. Dale and Ashworth. The flames which no human exertion could subdue, then extended to the Store and dwelling of John H. Dale, destroying in its course, the large building of W. P. Milby, in which was the Auction Room of Murdock & Milby. The County Clerk's office and the Drug Store of David Lewis. The large beautiful building known as the Ohler House then took fire and the entire building with nearly all its contents was totally destroyed. The flames spread to the Custom House on the opposite side of the street, which was consumed. The adjoining house was pulled down, which with the great exertion of the citizens, prevented the flames from spreading further. The Post Office, which was also in Lewis' building was also destroyed, but we learn that the books and mail matter were saved.

The Hook and Ladder Company was handicapped by lack of water and equipment, this Company was termed "The Bucket Brigade." A line was formed and buckets of water were passed from one to the other and thrown upon the fire.

MEMBERS OF THE HOOK AND LADDER COMPANY

Presidents: C. W. Short, Charley Burbank, Capt. Sheppard. Members: Lehman, Linderman, Leonard, Andrew Dove, Dudley Schultz, Walter Seeligson, Willie Morrison, Tony Plat, Dan Sullivan, Charley Hogan, Wm. Hogan, Jacob Ham, Frank Coffin.

September 17th, 1875, a most disastrous hurricane swept the Coast country, drowning hundreds of people. The horror and suffering of that storm cannot be accurately described. The Island was completely submerged and at Indianola, the water from the Gulf and Bay, rose seven and eight feet in the homes of the inhabitants. The wind was blowing 110 miles an hour. Cypress cisterns were caught by the wind and blown entirely out of the water and crushed in mid-air like paper boxes. Boats were blown high and dry on the prairie some four or five miles inland. A log was blown across the lake with a man clinging to one end and on the other lay a rattlesnake. When the wind changed from Southeast to Northwest, it became so terrific in its power that all the water which had blown in for four days were blown back to sea in two hours. Wind and water took almost everything with it, cutting two bayous across town, one called "Mathula," close to the Billing's Hotel and the other called "Sul-

livan." The wind and water had thrown all kinds of debris back of the town. This formed a raft 17 miles long, composed of pianos, dishes, dead and maimed people, cows, horses, feed, ships, houses, concrete pillars, bowls, clothes, in fact everything conceivable, a wreck master was appointed by the state to untangle this mass of wreckage.

Mr. Andrew Miller wrote, "during the storm, my ear was split in two by a piece of flying slate blown from the Cassimire Building. Mrs. Mitchell sewed my ear together with a needle and thread as good as a doctor could have done and no scar remains to tell the tale."

Mr. Frank Coffin writes, "Mr. W. H. Crain (who was afterwards Congressman) and I assisted friends into Mr. Regan's home. We watched the on rushing mountain high waves coming in from the Bay and when the wind changed, we thought it our doom. Mr. Crain offered a prayer of thanks for deliverance from the fury of the storm. Later in years, I took occasion to remind him of his wonderful supplication. I said, "he had made a miserable failure as a lawyer, when he might have been a Bishop, maybe a Pope."

During the storm, the jail contained prisoners, among them was Bill Taylor and Abe Slaughter. As the jail filled with water, the sheriff refused to liberate the prisoners. Mr. Crain took the keys from the sheriff and opened the door, thus freeing the inmates. Soon Mr. Crain accidentally fell into the water and Bill Taylor

remarked, "Bill Crain will never prosecute me again" and he never did as Bill Taylor borrowed Runge & Company's old dray horse and made his "get away," however, the horse was returned later. He, Crain, was rescued from the water.

After the storm Louis Barnard took his house to Victoria on a wagon. Many tore their houses down and moved them to other places.

One by one the inhabitants moved away, although a few clung to the dear old place until the tidal wave of Aug. 20, 1836, and fire swept over the Island and destroyed almost everything. After that the place was definitely abandoned.

The citizens of Indianola were the "salt of the earth," kindly, considerate, and peace loving, and though during its limited existence of about 30 years it was visited by four epidemics of yellow fever, 1852, '53, '62 and '67. Two scourges of cholera and innumerable storms and though it has disappeared from the earth, there still lingers hallowed memories, of Indianola, the City that once was the social and commercial center of Southwest Texas, where now, pink and white oleanders bloom profusely, salt cedars wave their feathery blossoms and wild flowers of every hue grow in riotous profusion. Indianola the "Dream City of the Gulf," is no more, but on a ridge on the main land in Highland Cemetery lies the sacred dust of many of its inhabitants."

